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THE OBSERVATOR.

A Continuation of the Diſcourſe on the Plays. *Of the* Raree-Shows.

From Wednesday February the 16th, to Saturday February the 19th, 170¾.

Country-m. MAfter *Obſervator*, I thank you for your laſt Diſcourſe on the *Play-houſes*; indeed it was a very good thing; I thought it did me as much good as a Sermon: For I always thought theſe *Players* were a parcel of Rogues. But now I am fully ſatisfy'd they Act againſt the Laws of *God* and *Man*; I wou'd have them all Hang'd.

Obſ. Well, well, not ſo faſt neither; you ſee Her Majeſty has been ſenſible of their Villanies, and has made an Order for Reſtraining them.

Country-m. Reſtraining them, d'ye call it? I think the Queen is too good to them, to give them any Liberty of growing better. I don't believe they'll ever mend their Manners: I had rather Her Majeſty had quite De (what d'ye call it) moliſh'd them.

Obſ. You always run too faſt; you are not to tell Her Majeſty when, to whom, or how long She is to be Merciful: Let them go on a little, Her Majeſty is tender of Her Subjects, and Naturally Good; but if they proceed, She may take a time to let them know She knows how to be Angry: *Juſtice* is ſure, tho' it may be ſlow.

Country-m. Well, but they tell us, in the Country, theſe Fellows have been ſo Impudent ſince that, when Her Majeſty, to Divert the Court, Order'd them to Act before Her, and as any Body might ſuppoſe, to ſee how Innocent they were in their Behaviour; they took care to ſhow themſelves by Acting things which Angred Her very much, and ſome ſay did it on purpoſe.

Obſ. I can't tell what they Acted; but the *Play* they Preſented before the Queen, was, *All for Love, or the World well loſt.*

Country-m. A Rope of your Title! I don't know what you mean by *All for Love*: Pray will you tell me what the meaning of it was, and let me have the Truth of it, that I may be able to Anſwer our Country Folk, when they Talk of it again at our *May-Pole.*

Obſ. Why, the meaning's this, That *Mark Anthony*, the Famous *Roman*, forſook all the Glorious Conqueſts of his former Life, and all the Proſpect he had, both of Empire and Victory, for the Love of his Dear *Cleopatra.*

Country-m. Say you ſo? And what was this Miſtreſs *Cleop*——, how d'ye call her?

Obſ. Why, She was Queen of *Ægypt.*

Country-m. And I warrant ye, ſhe was wounDy Handſome; wan't ſhe?

Obſ. Yes, yes; ſhe was a fine Woman, without doubt.

Country-m. Well, and he was an Honeſt Fellow to Love his Wife ſo well: That could be no Affront to my Queen, I'm ſure: But, Pray, why do ye call her by that ſham hard Name, I can't remember it: Methinks they ſhould ha' call'd her Miſtreſs *Anthony*, or Queen *Anthony*, or ſomething.

Obſ. Aye; but there lies the bottom of the matter: This fine Queen was a Damn'd *Inſatiable*, *Luxurious Monſter*, a *Royal Strumpet*, of a Name ſo Infamous; that I want words to Deſcribe her to you; and Hiſtory is fain to be ſparing in deſcribing the Rankneſs of her Character, leſt Poſterity ſhou'd take it for a Romance: In ſhort, Honeſt *Country-man*, ſhe was an Old, Brimſtone, Surfeited *Whore*; a meer *Ægyptian Gypſie*; a *Whore* ſo intollerably Vain, that ſhe would diſſolve Jewels of ineſtimable value, in a Glaſs of *Wine*, and Drink them off to her *Luſtful Lover.*

Country-m. Out upon her for a *Carrion Quean!* A *Whore* indeed! And what do they ſay of him?

Obſ. Why; they ſay he was ſo Drowned in his Sordid *Luſt*, and Doted ſo much upon her, that he quitted his *Army*, who would have ſtood out to the laſt, and Fought for him to all Extremity; and leaving all his Friends to the Mercy of his Enemies, made his Retreat to the Arms of this Syren; and through the height of Intollerable *Stupidity*, gave himſelf over to *Love* and *Deſpair*; and this they call *Loſing all for Love*; and then add, That ſo to do, is *the World well loſt.* The *Engliſh* of the Story is this, That he who Sacrifices all his *Fortunes*, and his *Life*, to the Embraces of a *Whore*, loſes the *World well.*

Country-m. O Rogues! Villains! What did they ſay all this before my Queen?

Obſ. No, no; they had ſo much Knowledge of the Wickedneſs of the thing it ſelf, that they cut ſhort where they thought it would Offend the Royal Ear.

Country-m. But how could they have the Face to Act ſuch a *Play*, at ſuch a *Place*, and *Time* as that?

Obſ. Let them Account for that: —— In my poor Opinion, it looks as if it was contriv'd as a particular Inſult to the Queen; and nothing but Her Majeſties Goodneſs could have ſav'd them from Extraordinary Reſentments: But, nevertheleſs, the Fact ſeems to me very Villainous in it ſelf; and the *Reſentment* of all thoſe that had any Reſpect for the *Queen*, and for the Honour of Her Majeſties Government, is plain enough.

Country-m I don't know what you think of it, nor what you talk of Reſentment; but if my Queen would give me leave, I'd Act a better

better *Play* upon them all, I'd make such a *Comedy* of it.

Obs. A *Comedy* you mean.

Country-m. I mean I'd rub them down with my Oaken Towel, till I made them Caper; *Oats's Dance* should be a Fool to it; I'd Cure them of Acting their Wicked Stuff before my Queen.

Obs. You would make a *Tragedy* of it, for ought I know; I am for their coming to Justice, but not for breaking of Bones.

Country-m. Bones, Quotha! Shall a Pack of Anticks bring their Whores and Rogues upon the Stage, in Defiance of Her Majesties late Reforming Order, and do it before her Face? 'Tis intollerable! I can't bear it.

Obs. Let them alone, they'll bring the Laws on their Back fast enough; our Business is to Observe, 'tis the Law's Business to Censure, and the Government's to Punish: And Fellows of such Unaccountable Impudence, cannot long go Unpunish'd.

Country-m. But, Master *Observator*, now we Talk of these *Play-Houses*, Pray what Kin are those Antick Fellows that come down to our Fair with their *Plays* and *Fine Shows*, to these People? Don't they all belong to the same Gang.

Obs. O there is a great deal to be said of them, they are a Kin to them in *Vice*, but not in Quality; but each of them very diligent in their Calling, to help on the Ruin of their Native Country, and encourage Debauchery.

Country-m. You have told me a great deal of your Actors here; I have a great many good Stories to tell you of Ours.

Obs. They are equal in *Wickedness*, tho not in *Wit*.

Country-m. One as bad as t'other, Onely these Town *Players* Debauch you Citizens, and they do the same for our Country Folk. I have a good mind to bring up a Petition to my Queen to get them all put down.

Obs. They would soon be suppress't, if first this Original of *Hell* was destroy'd; but if we can't get rid of these Founders of *Vice*, I can see no Probability to suppress the Other.

Country-m. Nay, they tell us, they have Authority by Law to Act their *Plays*, and show us a Warrant from the *Master of the Rebels*, for their Justification.

Obs. The *Master of the Revels* you mean.

Country-m. Pray, Master *Observator*, who is this *Master of the Revels*, as you call him? What is he a *Licenser of Sin?* Has he Power to give all the World leave to be as bad as they can?

Obs. Truly, Honest *Country-man*, I think he takes some Powers upon him too, that he has no right to; but he signifies little in the matter: As to the *Plays*, and *Shows* in the Fair, and in all the Country Towns in *England:* 'Tis in the Power of every *Mayor*, or other Supreme Magistrate in the Town, to forbid them Acting within their bounds; and every One that is in the least forward to Promote the *Reformation of Manners*, and suppressing of *Vice* in the Nation, will take care to do it, that the Youth may not be Debauch'd all over the Nation, and the Laws defyed by every Mercenary *Pick-Pocket Puppet-Player*.

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